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(54) FUEL CELL, SEPARATOR FOR FUEL CELL, AND MANUFACTURE THEREFOR

(57) Abstract:

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To easily manufacture a separator, excellent in electrical resistance, gas permeability, liquid swelling properties, and mechanical strength, and satisfactory in moldability, by molding expanded graphite powder having a specific average grain size and mixed with a resin.

SOLUTION: Expanded graphite powder having an average grain size of 50  $\mu m$  or more is previously manufactured and mixed with a resin, and the mixture is molded into a separator. If the average size of the expanded graphite powder is less than 50  $\mu m$ , the

separator is larger in electrical resistivity and inferior in mechanical characteristics, and therefore 80 to 500 µm is preferable. As the expanded graphite powder, expanded graphite having worm-like shapes and compression characteristics, can be obtained, for example, by immersing graphite in a solution with an acid constituent, thereby producing a graphite interlayer compound, rinsing the graphite, and rapidly heating it so as to cause graphite crystals to extend in the C axis direction. This graphite is worked into a sheet-like shape and then pulverized. As the resin, a non-solvent liquid epoxy resin, a solid epoxy resin, a melamine resin, an acryl resin, a phenol resin, a polyamide resin, and the like are used.

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